

Office of the Chairman

Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

September 6, 2011

Mr. Richard F. Timmons
President and Treasurer
American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association
50 F Street NW, Suite 7020
Washington, DC 20001-1536

Re: End-of-Year 2011 Railroad Service Outlook

Dear Richard:

For several years, the Surface Transportation Board (Board) has asked each class-one railroad, along with the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA), to provide a forward-looking assessment of its ability to meet end-of-year business demands for US rail service. We are aware that freight rail volumes nationwide have rebounded strongly from the lows of the recession, but that overall carload volumes are still trailing pre-recession levels, and year-over-year growth appears to be slowing. Intermodal traffic has seen an even stronger resurgence, but, again, gains may be tapering off.

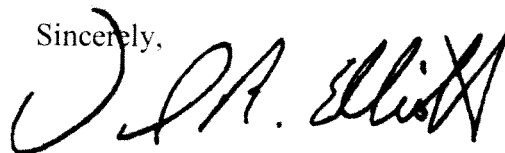
The member railroads of ASLRRA play an important role in providing direct “steel wheel” rail service to a significant number of shippers in the United States, and the Board is interested in their thoughts and comments.

Anticipating the current trend of increased rail shipments for the remainder of 2011, we ask that any interested ASLRRA member railroads provide their service plans for the remainder of the year, including:

- To the extent member railroads have been affected by recent extreme weather conditions, the effort that railroad has undertaken to restore damaged infrastructure and restore service;
- The actions that railroad will take to prepare for an end-of-year shipping season, with specific references to each of the following commodity areas: agriculture (grain, grain products, and ethanol), coal and intermodal; and finally
- A summary of the investments made in freight service and capacity improvements for the past year.

I ask that you or any concerned ASLRRA member railroads respond to this letter and provide the Board with this information by September 27, 2011. Please keep in mind that, as has been the case in the past, the Board expects to make the responses public. I look forward to your responses and to continuing to work together to ensure that the shipping public has efficient and reliable rail service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D.R. Elliott III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "R" and a stylized "Elliott".

Chairman Daniel R. Elliott III

cc: The Honorable Ann D. Begeman, Vice Chairman
The Honorable Francis P. Mulvey, Commissioner